

## Minutes of Friends of Spencer Park and Recreation Ground Management Committee Monday January 7<sup>th</sup>. 2013

**Present:** Paul Smith (Chair), Karen Berry (Secretary), Helen Elias (Treasurer), Esther Higden, Tim Brooke, Fiona Pashazadeh (committee members)

**Apologies:** Zilpha Reid

1. Minutes of the meeting 12.11.2012 were accepted as accurate.
2. **Matters arising** - The bulbs that were planted are now appearing. Karen shifted compost on Dec. 27<sup>th</sup>. on her own! Bird box building did not take place at Earlsdon after school club due to insufficient interest. Karen will set up a date with Steve Wright for bird feeder construction during the February half term Paul has accepted nomination for the NENA committee. Karen will pursue the installation of signs with Dave Lewis.
3. **Playground equipment** – The small playground on Gordon St. is not being used and may be scheduled for closure. Karen and Tim to investigate. Tim talked with Ces Edwards at the Earlsdon Neighbourhood Forum meeting. He emphasized the importance of consultation to impress funders that there is strong local backing for developments. He is keen on landscaping a play area with logs and boulders with an undulating rather than flat surface. He is concerned about ongoing maintenance. Tim felt that we need to be vigilant that the money set aside for resurfacing the old tennis courts is still available as matched funding for our bids. Karen reported that Wren will need three quotes. Helen has arranged for Andy Stevenson of Durasport to come and see the old tennis court site on Thursday Jan 10<sup>th</sup> , meeting at her house at 9.30.
4. **Funding** - The £1000 from the Heart of England is in the Friends bank account - to be used for gardening equipment and consultation events. We are eligible to apply for WREN funding as we are within ten miles of a landfill site. Maximum is £50,000, requiring 11% matched funding (£5500) The project needs to be something that is not provided elsewhere. The all weather pitch would fulfill this requirement but it would require the whole grant leaving nothing for the children's playground. It was felt that it would be worthwhile including some adult and older children's equipment in the bid. Karen felt we should go for the July 31<sup>st</sup>. deadline getting a bid in in June. Consultation will be crucial. Ces Edwards has put in an exploratory bid under the old funding stream of Parks for the People (Lottery) and should hear in February. The

committee expressed some concern that we had not been aware he was doing this so had not been involved.

- 5. Consultation** – Esther previously worked with Fay ? on consultation and there is a rough questionnaire that Esther and Helen worked on a couple of years ago. Esther also worked with Kevin Noble on survey monkey. This can be developed and sent out to the NENA email list and street reps after a pilot has been conducted. Consultation should also involve other user groups such as the Bowling group, SENA and residents of the Westminster Rd area. Fiona has contacts in the Newcombe Rd area. Esther and Karen will speak to Earlsdon and Hearsall schools with a view to canvassing the children's ideas. Helen offered support. We can also consult at the bird feeder event, during the Easter holidays, the May bank holiday, Earlsdon Festival, bands in the park and the big lunch. Karen will find out the dates of the bands in the park. Fiona will put an article in the Echo and on the NENA and I love Earlsdon facebook pages. We could display pictures of alternative play provisions – Helen has several laminated posters from various suppliers. A noticeboard in the park would be helpful. Other ideas for events in the park included folk/morris dancing and singing. We need to find when the park is re-opening.
- 6. Parks visit Sat. Nov. 24<sup>th</sup>.** – Paul, Tim Helen and Esther visited the children's playgrounds at Stoke Green, Stoke Heath and Sovereign Row. It was a very wet day which enabled us to evaluate safety surfaces. The matting which allowed grass to grow through did not seem very effective and was mostly just a muddy mess. The artificial grass matting seemed tough under swings and would be useful in combination with the wet pour rubber tarmac where safety surfaces are needed. It was felt that we would like to see a combination of logs, boulders and wooden balance ways with traditional metal equipment such as swings, and a central climbing/slide feature. Ordinary tarmac with markings would be adequate for children's bike/scooter play etc. Helen took photos of the parks visited and will mount these for the next meeting.
- 7. AOB** – Next gardening date will be Thursday January 31<sup>st</sup>. 2-4 pm.
- 8. Next meeting** Monday Feb. 4<sup>th</sup> 7.30 pm at Esther's house.